

## Fourth Annual Steve Crosman Award



David Hawes, who recently retired from the Regional Water Resource Agency (RWRA) – Max Rhoads Wastewater Treatment Plant and East Wastewater Treatment Plant, has been honored with the fourth annual Steve Crosman Award for Outstanding Environmental Professionalism. Hawes, who holds a Class IV Wastewater Treatment license, was nominated by Dean Behnke, RWRA.

The Kentucky Division of Compliance Assistance (DCA) presents this annual award in memory of Steve Crosman, a trainer with the Certification and Licensing Branch of DCA, who passed away in December 2011. Crosman devoted himself to ensuring safe water for Kentucky by doing his best to assist and train operators.

Hawes led the effort to form a new city/county joint sewer agency to succeed the Owensboro Sewer Commission, which had fallen under sanctions from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and from the Kentucky Division of Water. The commission was subjected to an Agreed Order for the Owensboro-Daviess community that restricted growth without annexation of regional sewer service.

Under Hawes's direction, the Regional Water Resource Agency has seen the renovation and upgrade of its old treatment facility of several large pumping stations and the extension of sewer service to approximately 4,500 customers. The estimated cost of capital improvements during his tenure is \$136 million.

Hawes led the agency to pursue a unique approach in complying with the EPA's mandated Combined Sewer Overflow Policy (CSO) by invoking the presumption approach in its Long-Term Control Plan (LTCP). This approach saved the community millions of dollars and saw projects implemented that satisfied CSO control objectives as well as benefited the community. The LTCP approach demonstrated Hawes's efforts to cooperate with the City of Owensboro on projects that improved both the wastewater and storm water collection systems.

While facing opposition to form the joint city/county sewer agency, Hawes organized a permitted waste program in Daviess County and oversaw the formation of a comprehensive grease trap permitting and management program for the agency's service area that minimized grease-related sewer overflows. He also worked extensively to balance an aging combined sewer system with large-volume industrial waste streams, while improving Ohio River water quality and implementing economical sewer ordinances and rate structures.

Hawes demonstrated how he valued his almost six dozen employees when he implemented an agency-sponsored Financial Peace workshop for employees and their families, held periodic workshops on the Kentucky Retirement System and incentivized RWRA's wastewater treatment

plant operators to obtain the highest level of education and certification available from the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet.

He served as a member of several regional committees, including the Green River Area Development District's Water Management Council, the GO-EDC (an economic development agency for Owensboro and Daviess County), the Owensboro Chamber of Commerce and the Daviess County Drainage Commission.

In his honor, the sewer agency, the City of Owensboro and Daviess County recently announced that RWRA's East Treatment Plant has been renamed the "David Hawes Treatment Plant."